



## Guidelines for Student International Travel

Students traveling internationally for a university-related purpose that is sponsored, administered or organized by UTRGV, regardless of credit or funding source should complete a Request for Authorization for Student Travel and obtain approval.

Examples of university-related international travel include, but are not limited to:

- Class field trips, internships, practicum, service learning opportunities, research, field studies;
- Attendance at scholarly or professional conferences;
- Volunteer, experiential, or work programs organized, endorsed, or promoted by UTRGV;
- Registered student organization sponsored regardless of whether or not the organization requires its members to attend;
- Athletic, student publication, dramatic, music, or forensic competition or performances
- Study Abroad or student exchange programs

As of June 5, 2018 UTRGV adopted UT Austin's International Oversight Committee procedures regarding travel to **Mexico**, which include:

- **All student travel** requests to Mexico will be reviewed and require approval by the IOC regardless of the location within Mexico.
- Employee travel requests to Mexico will be referred to the Chair of the IOC or other IOC designee for initial review. If employee requests include only locations in Mexico under a "Level 2- Exercise Caution" advisory (remember, this is the same level as Italy, France, UK), travel may proceed without additional IOC review and approval.
- If travel requests include locations within Mexico under U.S. Department of State "Level 3- Reconsider Travel" or "Level 4- Do Not Travel", full IOC review and approval is required for travel.
  - Currently, Level 3 - 4 locations are: the states of Chihuahua, Coahuila, Colima, Durango, Guerrero, Jalisco, Michoacán, Morelos, Nayarit, Nuevo Leon, San Luis Potosi, Sinaloa, Sonora, State of Mexico (except Mexico City which is Level 2), Tamaulipas, and Zacatecas.
  - ANY travel to these states, regardless of specific city/town location inside the state will continue to be reviewed by IOC, except as already noted, Mexico City.
- Here is the reference link to UT Austin's procedure:  
<https://world.utexas.edu/risk/policies/restricted-regions/list/mexico>

**Students engaging in university-related international travel are required to:**

Step 1: Identify the Travel Coordinator (must be a full-time faculty or staff member at UTRGV)

The Travel Coordinator is responsible for submitting all travel documentation to ensure necessary information on the Travel Forms is complete. In case of an accident, the Travel Coordinator is responsible for contacting the University Police Department Ph# (956) 882-7777 who will notify the appropriate personnel. It is recommended that the Travel Coordinator attend the trip as well.

For the duration of the travel, the Travel Coordinator is designated by the institution as a Campus Security Authority (CSA). CSA's have the responsibility to for reporting any Clery reportable crime on a timely basis to the UTRGV Police Department for compliance with the [Jeanne Clery Act](#).

Step 2: Complete the following forms.

1. *Authorization for Student Travel Form*
2. *A Release and Indemnification Agreement Form* for each student attending.
  - If more than ten (10) students are in attendance, submit the Group Travel Roster, which includes the names, student identification numbers, emergency contact name and phone number for each participant.

Step 3: Submit your Student International Travel forms at least 20 days in advance of departure to the International Programs & Partnership (IPP) to be registered with:

1. The UT System's International SOS program which is a 24/7 medical and security assistance provider and
2. Student International Travel Accident and Sickness Insurance.

If there are any question on registering, IPP office can help. Office Ph # (956) 665-3572.

Step 4: Obtain review and approval from the International Oversight Committee (IOC).

Some areas of the world present heightened health and safety risks that may be of concern for travelers. Therefore, the IOC is responsible for recommending protocols and overseeing institutional efforts to facilitate registration of University-sponsored travel with UT System's emergency assistance provider prior to departure.

The IOC is responsible for reviewing and approving all University-related international travel to areas of High Risk. This includes all student travel to locations where:

- A. The U.S. State Department has issued a Travel Advisory of Level 2 or higher or
- B. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a Warning Level 3: Avoid Nonessential Travel Health Notice; or
- C. The IOC has deemed significant health, safety, or security risks are present; this could include:
  - i. any region with a U.S. State Department Travel Advisory recommendation of "do not travel" or "reconsider travel" within a country rated as Travel Advisory Level 2: Exercise increased caution or Level 1: Exercise normal precautions.
  - ii. any region with a high or extreme risk rating from a contracted security assistance provider. The U.S. State Department Travel Advisories can be found at: <https://travel.state.gov>.

Step 5: Submit the completed *Authorization for Student International Travel form* and the *Release and Indemnification form(s)* for each individual participant of the trip to the Office of the Dean of Students (DOS) **after** gaining IPP approval as well as IOC approval (if applicable).

The Dean of Students or designee will provide final review of the international travel request. Approved forms will be signed and notification of approval sent to the Travel Coordinator.

Step 6: The Travel Coordinator should conduct a Pre-trip orientation with travelers.

Sample Agenda for Orientation:

I. Expectations for conduct

Communicate expectations for participation and applicable rules of conduct. For example, all students, or non-University Students participating in University sponsored programs, are required to follow the Student conduct and Discipline policy which observe the standards of conduct appropriate for an

academic institution. The following practices are considered unacceptable for members of the University Community but not limited to:

- Illegal Use, Possession and sale of drugs
- Computer usage violations, use of alcoholic beverages, and dishonesty
- Conduct endangers, and verbal or written threats
- Inappropriate behavior if members of an academic institution

II. Review Itinerary and contact information: It is crucial that the Travel Coordinator has verified all traveler contact information. The privacy of the information should be maintained and used to maintain the safety of the participants. Provide a copy of the itinerary for participants to keep track of travel and daily activities. The Travel Coordinator is responsible for approving and deviations from the itinerary and communicating changes to travelers.

III. Provide safety tips while traveling.

*For example:*

- Advise participants to keep forms of Identification on them at all times. For example: Passport, Driver's License, and Student ID, medical documentation/insurance card.
- Instruct them to be cautious and aware of their surroundings.
- Avoiding areas of demonstrations if possible, and to be careful within the vicinity of demonstrations.
- Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate to violence. Please be advised to stay current with the point of destination's media coverage.
- Be vigilant, as pickpocketing, mugging and "snatch and grab" theft of mobile phones, watches and jewelry can occur.
- Do not leave bags unattended in restaurants, pubs, hotel lobbies, and parked cars.
- To be alert of any criminal activity or criminal schemes, such as impostors posing as undercover police officers and "fining" tourists for bogus minor offenses.
- A legitimate Metropolitan Police Services officer will never demand an immediate cash payment.
- All participants are subject to local laws. If they violate local laws, even unknowingly, he/she may be expelled, arrested, or imprisoned. A U.S. passport will not protect any violators from being arrested, prosecuted, or jailed.
- **If a traveler is arrested or detained, ask police or prison officials to notify the U.S. Embassy immediately and the Travel Coordinator.**

IV. Provide cultural context and tips to travelers.

Resources:

1. Sample Participant Agreement
2. Student/Group Travel Roster
3. International Programs and Partnerships is dedicated to providing leadership in support of campus internationalization through study abroad programming, agreements of cooperation with partner institutions abroad, and providing support to schools and departments hosting visiting scholars.
4. The Student Travel policy (STU 01-300) which sets forth University rules and procedures regarding student and pre-college University program participant travel and to comply with [The University of Texas System policy](#) and state law (Texas Education Code§51.950) relating to student travel. University students

may travel off campus when representing a student organization, University department, or engaging in intercollegiate competition or academic activities.

5. The International Travel Policy (UTS 190) provides a framework of institutional oversight that promotes the health, safety, and security of UT System travelers and initiatives abroad. This policy applies to The University of Texas System academic and health institutions and to all students, faculty, staff, and official guests/volunteers participating in University-sponsored international travel.
6. UTS Regents Rule 20801 Sec 2. Authorization for foreign travel shall be transmitted through proper administrative channels to the Chancellor or the president of the institution, as applicable, or the respective officer's designee, for advance written approval. Authorization for foreign travel by Chief Administrators must be obtained as required by Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, [Rule 20205](#), Expenditures for Travel and Entertainment by Chief Administrators and for the Maintenance of University Residences.
7. Travel.State.Gov.-U.S. Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs  
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/about-our-new-products.html>

*Office of the Dean of Students*

Cavalry 204 – Brownsville  
(956) 882-5141

University Center 323 – Edinburg  
(956) 665-2260

[dos@utrgv.edu](mailto:dos@utrgv.edu)